

I've lived in Upstate New York my entire life, and I can say without hesitation that no other issue has ever generated so much opposition from the community at-large.



In 2006, the New York Regional Interconnect (NYRI) began efforts to build a 400kV DC transmission line approximately 190-miles starting in Utica, NY through Oneida, Madison, Otsego, Broome, Delaware and Sullivan Counties, not only scarring Upstate New York's beautiful landscape but also leading to increased energy costs for Upstate families and businesses. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 created a process by which the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) could issue permits for projects to build or modify electrical transmission lines by use of federal eminent domain powers to condemn private land.

Since coming to Congress in 2007, I have fought at every turn, in every way possible; to prevent NYRI from moving forward with plans to construct this intrusive and ill-planned power line across Upstate New York. Although NYRI's plan to cut a scar through our backyards and our communities has, effectively, been stopped, I can assure you, I will remain vigilant and connected to local advocacy groups in order to prevent a proposal like this from ever being pushed on Upstate New Yorkers again.

Below is a timelining of every major step I have taken since coming to Congress in 2007 to stop the NYRI power line dead in its tracks.

February 19, 2007 - U.S. Representatives Michael A. Arcuri, Maurice Hinchey and John Hall introduced two pieces of legislation to block the NYRI project:

H.R. 809, which would repeal the entire section of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 which authorizes the Department of Energy to designate "national corridors" and permits companies to use federal eminent domain power. Under this legislation, NYRI would be confined to the state procedures for approving electric transmission projects.

H.R. 810, which would modify the section of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 authorizing companies permitted to build or modify transmission lines within a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor to use federal eminent domain. The legislation amends this section so companies like NYRI are confined to follow state law. Because of the revisions of the state eminent domain law signed by former NYS Governor George Pataki, NYRI would be unable to use New York's eminent domain procedures - leaving them without any eminent domain power.

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March 27, 2007 - Successfully amended the Rail & Public Transportation Security Act (H.R. 1401) to require the federal government to evaluate the safety and security of placing high voltage direct current electric transmission power lines along active railroad rights-of-way. The amendment would also require the federal government to report the findings of this assessment to Congress within six months of enactment of the Act.

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April 25, 2007 - The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held a hearing regarding implementation of Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which created sweeping new federal authority to site electric transmission lines throughout the country. Arcuri questioned witnesses, including high-level Energy Department officials, regarding New York Regional Interconnects (NYRI) proposal to construct a high-voltage direct current electric transmission line in Upstate New York.

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April 27, 2007 - Requested follow-up congressional hearings and a Department of Energy public meeting in Upstate New York to address public concerns regarding the Department of Energy's draft proposal to create a *Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor*. In a letter to Kevin Kolevar, Director of the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, Arcuri requested local public meetings in Upstate New York to allow communities most affected by NYRI's proposed power line the opportunity to voice their concerns.

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May 10, 2007 - Criticized the U.S. Department of Energy's announcement that it will hold an additional public meeting in Rochester, NY regarding its draft designation of a *Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor*. In response, Arcuri announced he will hold his own public meetings in Norwich and New Hartford.

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May 31 and June 1, 2007 - Hosted public meetings in Norwich and New Hartford regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) draft proposal to create a *Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor* that could allow New York Regional Interconnection (NYRI) to thwart state authority and use federal eminent domain to acquire private property. Arcuri collected hundreds of public comment forms, which he submitted to the DOE in Washington, D.C.

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June 12, 2007 - Joined hundreds of local Stop NYRI supporters at the Department of Energy public meeting in Rochester regarding the draft *Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor*, and spoke in strong opposition to NYRI proposal and the proposed Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor.

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June 20, 2007 - Spoke in strong support of an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2008 Energy & Water Appropriations Bill (offered by Rep. Maurice Hinchey), which would prohibit the Department of Energy from using any funds to create National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) designations. [Read More](#)

August 3, 2007 - President Bush signed into law H.R. 1, Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, which included language - offered by Arcuri as an amendment to H.R. 1401, Rail and Public Transportation Security Act of 2007 - instructing the Government Accountability Office to assess the placement of high voltage, direct current electric transmission lines along active railroad and transportation rights-of way. The assessment includes an analysis of the economic, safety, and security risks and benefits to the inhabitants living adjacent to such rights-of-way and to consumers of electric power transmitted by such transmission lines. The report was submitted to Congress within six months.

August 4, 2007 - Offered an amendment to the New Direction for Energy Independence, National Security, and Consumer Protection Act (H.R. 3221) that would have prevented energy companies from using federal eminent domain power to condemn private property. NYRI would have been forced to use the state eminent domain process. Because of the revisions of the state eminent domain law signed by Governor Pataki in 2006, NYRI would then have been unable to use New York's eminent domain procedures - leaving them without any eminent domain power to acquire private property. [Read More](#)

October 12, 2007 - Requested an immediate study of energy-saving alternatives to building new transmission lines. In a letter to Department of Energy Secretary Bondman, Rep. Arcuri and other members of Congress requested that the Department order a study of the ways in which 21st Century technology can be harnessed to reduce electric grid congestion without requiring additional power lines.

December 13, 2007 - Writes to Chairwoman Acampora of the New York State Public Service Commission to not respond to NYRI's request that they issue a declaratory ruling on whether a new state law limits the agency's authority to site the company's power line project. [Read More](#)

February 1, 2008 - Announced completion of the Government Accountability Office study of the placement of high voltage, direct current electric transmission lines along active railroad and transportation rights-of way. The independent, non-partisan study finds that siting new transmission lines, such as the one proposed by NYRI, may raise energy prices where the line starts, reduce property values and stunt alternative energy initiatives and energy conservation.

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Rep. Arcuri forwarded a copy of the report to the NYS Public Service Commission, which has included the report as part of the record on the NYRI project on the PSC website.

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February 28, 2008 - Writes to Chairman of the New York State Public Service Commission urging him to rule that NYRI's recent application re-filing is incomplete because it lacks a thorough examination of the Thruway alternative.

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April 3, 2008 - Writes to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission objecting to NYRI's request for guaranteed rate incentives for its investors because NYRI has not shown its proposed project is warranted or necessary. On May 13, 2008, FERC denied NYRI's request for lack of adequate justification.

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September 10, 2008 - Writes to Department of Energy requesting that the 2009 National Electric Transmission Congestion Study include a comprehensive assessment of congestion north of New York City.

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October 22, 2008 - Testifies before NYS Public Service Commission Administrative Law Judges in opposition to the NYRI project during a public hearing held at Mohawk Valley Community College.

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February 4, 2009 - Writes to newly-confirmed Department of Energy Secretary Dr. Steven Chu, introducing him to the NYRI battle and requesting a meeting with the Secretary to discuss the

matter.

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February 23, 2009 - Writes to new U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman, introducing him to the NYRI battle and enlisting his support in defeating the project.

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October 19, 2009 - The Federal Energy Regulatory commission (FERC) denies the appeal by NYRI to move forward with its plans, effectively preventing NYRI from any further attempts to build the 190-mile transmission line.

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